



State of Wisconsin
Department of Public Instruction
Elizabeth Burmaster, State Superintendent

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Burmaster statement on Florence community advisory referendum

MADISON—Voters in the Florence School District, a district that shares its boundaries with Florence County, voted yesterday in an advisory referendum against dissolution of the district and to exceed state-imposed revenue limits.

Earlier this year, the Florence School District School Board voted to dissolve the school district in the face of a looming financial crisis. That action by the school board set in motion a process, dictated by state law, that included the naming of a school dissolution review panel charged with determining if the district should be dissolved. If the review panel affirms the dissolution, it must assign the school district's territory, assets, and liabilities to one or more other school districts and determine employment status for district employees. The panel will make a final decision in January.

The seven-member panel is made up of the state superintendent or her designee and six elected school board members from around the state, who serve on the State Superintendent's School District Boundary Appeal Board.

"I am pleased the Florence School District community voted to support its local school district," said State Superintendent Elizabeth Burmaster. "The results of this referendum will provide the dissolution panel with additional information to consider prior to its decision."

Voters in Florence County also voted to exceed the state-imposed revenue limits to provide the school district with additional funds.

"While I am pleased the Florence School District community voted to support its local school district, I am well aware of the divided factions in Florence and the raised emotions that accompany the community's interest in this issue," said Burmaster. "Prior to the panel's vote, I encourage the community, for the sake of its children, to continue conversations about the future of the Florence School District and to work to find common agreement on the important issues it faces."

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